THE USES OF SOCIAL NETWORKING SITES AMONG JORDANIAN JOURNALISTS

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ABSTRACT

The new role of Social Networking Sites (SNSs) as a news platforms provides a motivation to more action. The Internet has encouraged to change the role of journalists in the communication process, and shifted the news style, and support people to use other news platforms to access information. This study is interested in knowing the reasons for the use of Jordanian journalists to social networking sites in their work. In addition, we aim to find out the change wrought by social networking sites on the roles of journalists and the transition from traditional media to new media. The finding of this paper found that, journalists can bring ideas and feedback about any issue from audiences and via continuous interactivity with users, journalists seeking to develop a different form of relationship more effective than the connection types created by traditional media. The Journalist is working on the review of people and journalists pages, and pages of news sites, local and international newspapers, to know the latest news and details about a specific issue, or to get new ideas could have used in the construction of a report or story.

KEYWORDS: Social Networking Sites, Social Media, Uses and Gratifications, Internet & Jordan

Original Article

INTRODUCTION

The main idea of social networks to collect data Members involved in the site and are openly publishing this data so members meet with common interests and who are looking for files or images ... etc. (Choi, Panek, Nardis, & Toma, 2015), they effective network sites are working to facilitate social life among a group of Knowledge and friends, old friends also able to connect to each other and after long years also enables them to visual and audio communication and sharing photos and other possibilities that solidified the social relationship (Boyd & Ellison, 2007; Church & de Oliveira, 2013). Is a social networking window with views of the world, where he found millions of peoples, in particular in the window to them free of social networks for ideas and cultures throughout the world (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). And the moment of registration of social networking sites and the acquisition of multiple applications to communicate with others to mobilize, you become an independent entity and globally (Boyd & Ellison, 2007).

These sites and applications are easy modification on their pages and content, as well as the freedom to add the content that expresses your mind and your beliefs, which may conflict with others, door is open to freedom of expression, making social networking sites a powerful tool to express their tendencies and trends and personal attitudes toward issues the nation's destiny (LaRose, Mastro, & Eastin, 2001). Users do not adopt a single platform of social media but tend to use a group of tools for communication (Quan-Haase, Wellman, Witte, & Hampton, 2002). This direction indicates that one type of social media does not replace other media but becomes integrated

with a forms of media that contains online and offline communication (Baym, Zhang, & Lin, 2004).

Users head for embrace new forms and adopt them as part of their communication (Whiting & Williams, 2013). Social trends have effect on the adoption and use of digital media, where use one of the media becomes common among users and reached a high level of penetration, and then daily use becomes fixed (Quan-Haase & Young, 2010). For instance, SMS use decreased when users adopted dramatically on SNSs for communication. This happened without SNSs totally replacing SMS but, rather, with SMS is becoming of secondary method for communication (Metzger, Flanagin, Eyal, Lemus, & McCann, 2003). These two directions suggest are that each type of social media has its own elements to attract users (Lenhart, 2009; Tsagkias, de Rijke, & Weerkamp, 2011). It also indicates that users do not totally replace one site of social media with another because each site supports the unique communication styles that the other site cannot completely fulfill. Because of the importance of the role of journalists in the preparation of news and broadcast to the public, and they are the intermediary between the source and the reader, and they are the source of industry news, this paper is interested in knowing the reasons for the use of Jordanian journalists to social networking sites in their work. In addition, we aim to find out the changes on the roles of journalists after using social networking sites and the transition from traditional media to new media.

Uses and Gratifications of Social Media

According to Raacke and Bonds-Raacke (2008, p. 169), SNSs are "virtual places that cater to a specific population," thus creating a status many users are unable to find it outside of internet. Sweetser, Porter, Chung, and Kim (2008) stated that in a recent study, readers found SNSs more credible than traditional media, which is causing dispute in what the academics considers credible. Due to this change and expansion of use of SNSs, researchers are depended on the Uses and Gratifications Theory (U&G) to explain why users seek to use this new type of media to be interesting. One of the more successful theoretical frameworks from which to examine questions of "how" and "why" individuals use media to satisfy particular needs has been the uses and gratifications (U&G) theory (Katz, Blumler, & Gurevitch, 1973; Quan-Haase & Young, 2010; Raacke & Bonds-Raacke, 2008; Ruggiero, 2000; Whiting & Williams, 2013).

Although U&G theory was originally founded to research traditional media (Katz et al., 1973), such as newspapers and T.V (Rubin, 1983), recent studies have applied U&G on new media (Flanagin, 2005; LaRose et al., 2001; Quan-Haase & Young, 2010; Whiting & Williams, 2013). Early theories of media like magic bullet, hypodermic needle theory, and two step flow, viewed the media as having a regular and instant impact on individuals, whom they consider easily susceptible to influence and unable to create their own opinions (Asiminei, 2011). The allegation was that the exposure to consolidated cultural goods lead to become the audience a homogeneous, uncritical, and negative interaction to resist the temptation and influence of media (Quan-Haase & Young, 2010).

The directedness of audience is what distinguishes U&G from early theories: The audience is active, aware, and has motivation to use new media. The focus of these theory on what people do with the media rather than the influence of the media on the audience (Katz et al., 1973). Conceiving of the audience to select and using media is response to specific needs. So, the basis to examine gratifications obtained from the media. The majority of the past research on U&G has focused on television (Bantz, 1982; McIlwraith, 1998; Sabigan, 2007) and other traditional media (Dimmick, Sikand, & Patterson, 1994; O'Keefe & Sulanowski, 1995). One of the characteristic feature of new media is interactivity, which represents the ability of users to provide content in response to a source or communication partner (T. Smith, 2009). The distinction in new media between consumer and producer of the news tends to be blur, which has led to the

introduction of the new term to describe users' ability to take control over the production and distribution of content (Bezjian-Avery, Calder, & Iacobucci, 1998).

Uses and gratifications theory is related with social media because of its origins in the communications literature. Social media is a communication methods that enables users to deal with thousands of individuals or groups all over the world (Williams, Crittenden, Keo, & McCarty, 2012). The foundation premise of U&G theory is that individuals will seek out media among competitors that meet their needs and leads to maximum of gratifications (Whiting & Williams, 2013). Focus on study social media is a paramount issue because we need to understand what encourages users to transformation from one tool (e.g. newspaper) to more. In addition, the synchronous use of different types suggests that each one fulfills a distinguished need and this is helping to make an analysis of U&G (Quan-Haase & Young, 2010).

Today, applying the U&G Theory to SNSs is of pivotal issue in media research because this types of media is comparatively new (Gallion, 2012). The social ingredient is the central element in applying the U&G theory to SNSs. Users who take part in SNSs in order to gratify socializing, typically, seek to know new people, maintain social relationships, and create a sense of community (Ellison, Steinfield, & Lampe, 2007; Gallion, 2012; Park, Kee, & Valenzuela, 2009). 96 per cent of users used SNSs to stay connected with old friends, more than 90 per cent to maintain relationships, and around 56 per cent to find new friends. User frequents an SNSs, "the greater the likelihood his or her social well- being" (Raacke & Bonds-Raacke, 2008, p. 170).

The majority of SNSs users finds gratification in the information dedicated to them through SNSs (Park et al., 2009). Users of SNSs in case they found information related to their hobbies or their knowledge or political background, their SNSs rate increase. Become of these sites (especially Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp, and YouTube) special world for the user to express his views and positions and communicate with others (Whiting & Williams, 2013). It proved that SNSs are becoming more popular than traditional media like T.V and newspapers, and there is a significant rise of use of SNSs among journalists and public relations departments as a source of credible information, and communicate with the audience (Duggan & Smith, 2013).

Social Media and Practice of Journalism

With the rising use of social media in presenting news, the users realized that news is changing (Marshall, Lefringhausen, & Ferenczi, 2015; R Mourtada & Salem, 2012), and people now expect to access news immediately with constant updates of news (Whiting & Williams, 2013). This is reflected on the direction and practice of journalism (Alejandro, 2010). The availability of online websites and SNSs have altered the way that journalists are able to do their work and it can be a valuable tool to support journalists in their newsgathering, and it can act as another platform for publishing content (T. Smith, 2009).

Social media has changed the role of the media, especially in how journalists write and support their stories. Although journalist hesitated in using social media at the beginning of their emergence, they now rely much on these social media in their work (Gaab, 2015). Journalists have increased the importance of posting on these social media (e.g. Facebook, Twitter, and WhatsApp), although they believe that the SNSs lack credibility (Hampton, Goulet, Rainie & Purcell, 2011; Terpstra, 2013). Although posting on these sites differs worldwide, around 75 percent of U.K. and U.S. journalists log into Facebook and Twitter on a daily basis (Duggan & Smith, 2013). A mobile messenger has more than 500 million monthly active users worldwide and is considered as one of the most common mobile social apps globally

(Church & de Oliveira, 2013). The SNSs are powerful tools for the flow of information and measure official and public opinion, and the publish of news (Alejandro, 2010). Urges media organizations all employees to use all of the social communication to increase the fan base (Himelboim & Limor, 2010).

This also means that in some cases journalists may are having competition with the followers in publishing breaking news via SNSs, such as Twitter, are increasingly being used as a source and a way to publish the news by the audiences, especially among younger (Murthy, 2013). Furthermore, journalists must check and verify information that posted via SNSs, and evaluate news that published on SNSs before they use it (Westerman, Spence & Van Der Heide, 2014). Internet consumers live in an interdependent world and they still need to information is more important to their lives, and it is the role of journalism to impart that information (Beckett, 2011). This means that journalism should search other ways to reach the new audience in cyberspace and encourage news organizations to adopt new technology and be familiar with in ways that add new value to their work (Ludtke, 2009).

Gordon (2009) believes that a recent direction in online news is not just having a website on the Internet where users come to discover content, but reaching out to the audience and updating news through different platforms on the Internet – known as SNSs. Generally, the mantra for news organizations and at present is to be anytime and anyplace on any channel (Picard, 2009).

The uptake of SNSs in news agencies is growing and today journalists are "romancing new communities by blogging and posting updates and stories on Twitter, YouTube and Facebook" (Stassen, 2010, p. 117). One of the greatest benefits of SNSs for journalists is the ability to deal with huge audiences in same place. SNSs are able to transfer information quickly among a large group of followers, and can provide a positive two-way connection with the audience, and changing significantly of how journalists deal with their audiences and listen to the feedback from the audiences (Newman, 2009). SNSs changed the local news to become globally, because of SNSs have the ability to spread information across the world instantaneously.

Culture of Internet Users in Jordan

In the last few years, Jordan has witnessed great development in the field of media and the Internet. Today Jordan has become one of the few States in the region which have an elaborative media industry at various levels (Pies & Madanat, 2011; Sweis & Baslan, 2013). Jordan has many prestigious media institutions with high quality journalists. Media organizations have worked to involve citizens in the media content and increase the level of interaction between them (CDFJ, 2011; FreedomHouse, 2014). Many of the Jordanian media organizations sought to take advantage of the Internet in the development of traditional media owned, and enter the competition with SNSs and websites. In addition to the relative freedom enjoyed by the media in Jordan, compared with neighboring countries, and this gives the media a good environment for the development of media content (FreedomHouse, 2015).

Data on social networking media in Jordan gives evidence for the contrary. In 2010, Internet world database Gender Stats counted over one million (1,104,340) Facebook users in Jordan (Racha Mourtada & Salem, 2011). It reached to over 2.5 million in May 2013. The number of Twitter users is around 89 thousand by end of 2013.

Connectivity is the main reason for people to use social media in the first place. It is followed by gaining information, watching videos, listening to music, and sharing photos. Many Jordanian use social media mainly for chatting. The second most common activity is reading posts/blogs by other people (ASMR, 2015). In 2015, WhatsApp and

Facebook were also the top used social media channels among Jordanian, 89 per cent for Facebook and 71 per cent for WhatsApp. Around 63 per cent of social media users in Jordan considered Twitter the most preferred social media channel (ASMR, 2015), and this percentage was the highest among Arab countries.

METHOD

A questionnaire is the most popular data collection technique in social science studies (Lawrence, 2007; Sekaran & Roger, 2003). Identifying the survey method and the process of data collection are essential steps in instrument design. In the process of conducting the study, 319 questionnaires were distributed to Jordanian Journalists in Jun and July 2016. Out of this number, 35 were excluded; 13 questionnaires were incomplete, and 22 questionnaires were not returned. Thus, a total of 284 responses were usable for subsequent analysis, giving a response rate of 89 %. This rate was due to the fact that the questionnaires were designed by online, and distributed using E-mail and Facebook profiles. In order to test for non-response bias, respondents can be divided in half (two groups): early respondents and late respondents. In this study, the researcher made use of t-test to verify if there is a significant difference between early respondents and late respondents. The results were free from data bias, and there were no significant differences between behavioral intention response groups. Thus, the data is free from response bias.

MEASURES

In this survey, was used Likert scale to know the views of respondents (1 = Disagree, 2 = Neutral, 3 = Agree) about the three types of uses of social networking sites; 1) To get new ideas, 2) Uses of the SNSs for the dissemination of news, 3) Review comments to see feedback or get new ideas. The measurements used in the survey were adapted from related studies and articles with some modifications to suit the sample. Getting new ideas were based on the roles of social networking sites in the development of ideas and stories (Alejandro, 2010; Tsagkias et al., 2011; Westerman et al., 2014). Measurements for the dissemination of news has been adapted from the studies that have focused on the features and services of social networking sites that help the journalist in his work (Raacke & Bonds-Raacke, 2008; Smith & Brenner, 2012). Review comments were related to the importance of this section of the social networking sites to help the journalist to obtain new information and ideas, or to identify the feedback from the public (Mitchell et al., 2013; Picard, 2009)

Furthermore, a data analysis was applied using Partial Least Squares-Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) software to examine the internal consistency (reliability) of the instrument items (survey variables) by using Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient (α), Composite Reliability, and Average variance extracted (AVE). The Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient for all variables were above 0.70 (Hair, Black, Babin, & Anderson, 2010). Therefore, the reliability analysis revealed an acceptable level of reliability values and the appropriateness of the instrument.

Table 1*: Reliability Level - Cronbach's Alpha for the Variables

Construct	No. of Items	Composite Reliability	Cronbach's Alpha	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
Get new Ideas	5	0.925	0.898	0.713
Dissemination of News	5	0.935	0.912	0.741
Review Comments	3	0.909	0.849	0.769

THE DISCUSSIONS

The new media has succeeded in transforming several important issues after the adoption by leading figures and spread among the people to public opinion issues (Lee, 2015; Mitchell, Kiley, Gottfried, & Guskin, 2013), which will lead to the attention of the community and those responsible for this issue (Shirky, 2011). No one today can claim to be interested in public affairs, or close to the people, without the use of one of the forms of new media (news sites, SNSs such as Facebook and Twitter) either directly or indirectly (Hampton et al., 2011). Journalists from more groups that used the new media, especially social networking sites, in their work to stay in touch with sources or the audiences (Tsagkias et al., 2011), and to find out news of the community, and the speed of getting any information from anywhere and at any time (Alejandro, 2010). Social networking sites helped at the speed of access and transfer of information between citizens.

More than half of respondents (59%) are using social networking sites on their work on a daily basis, and depend on these sites in the preparation of reports and news. 30% of Jordanian journalists are turning to social networking sites just to find out public opinion on the issue or to get more information. However, the traditional methods of obtaining information from sources are approved for this category of journalistsو especially with the uncertainty in the credibility of these sites. Some Jordanians journalists (11%) do not consider social networking sites a reliable source of news and information. A lot of information and multimedia published via these sites are fabricated and false in their opinion.

The majority of journalists in this survey agreed on the importance of social networking sites to help them in getting new ideas, clarify the elements of the idea, identify issues facing people, get into new sources, and get any information from anywhere and at any time. Journalists rely on social networking to get new ideas of sites through follow-up to the public. There are various sources to get new ideas using these sites; personal pages, public pages, the pages of the official institutions, events pages, the pages spatial, and activists' pages. New ideas that may be obtained by journalists through their exposure to these sites are beginning to build a new news story, and the beginning of the search for topics of interest to the public and be close to them. New ideas that may be obtained by journalists through their exposure to these sites are beginning to build a new news story, and the beginning of the search for topics of interest to the public and be close to them. This is evident in the previous table, where journalists are consistent with previous studies about the importance of social networking sites to help the journalist to know the issues facing the citizens and which still need to discussion. These sites are considered an outlet for citizens to express their opinions about local services and political issues. These sites help a journalist to see public attitudes on many issues through follow-up their activities

Another use of social networking sites by Jordanian journalists is to find new sources of help to clarify some of the elements in the news. This feature facilitated the work of a journalist, where it became easy for him to reach the largest number of sources needed by searching for them in social networking sites, especially since the majority of the sources to be active on these sites, and use it to connect with others. Many of the stories be interested in describing the issues facing the people, and social networking sites help in communicating with people who are associated with the events as they are considered an important source of the story. Some journalists resort to connect with a variety of sources to illustrate some of the ideas contained in the news, and this needs time and a large effort by the journalist to make sure these ideas. Social networking sites has provided a great service for the journalist to save time and effort where they can use these sites to get the information they need from anywhere and at any time.

One of the important sources to get new ideas through the use of SNSs, comments on post, news and issues.

Many people are commenting on the news, or information that people post without an official source, to illustrate news or to get feedback on the incorrect news (Mitchell et al., 2013). This feature provides a service for the journalist to know the reactions to the news and information that people transmits them in their own lives or using social networking sites (Callison, 2003; A. Smith & Brenner, 2012; Stavrositu & Sundar, 2008).

One of the most important services that can be used by Jordanian journalists, the comments section on social networking sites. Comments are considered an important part may be used by the journalist in order to ensure the credibility of the information, get new information, and communicate with different sources. The comments that accompany the news or information published using social networking sites may be a way to find out the reliability of this information. Many citizens, official sources follow the daily news and information published on these sites, as the fastest way to get as much information as possible in a short time, they have to comment on the news; if positive comments were consistent with the content of the news it might be considered evidence of the credibility of the news, or vice versa.

Journalists use the comments section to get new ideas or to connect with new sources. Comments on the news or information contain many new ideas that may be provided by the public, which could help in the development of the story or helping a journalist to know some of the reasons on the topic. Through the comments, the journalist can communicate with people who are close to the event, these people are considered an important source to know many new details about the event, and use these details to confront the officials and writing integrated and powerful story.

Journalists may choose SNSs because it can serve as a new technique to disseminate their content which they unable to use in their report. This sites ensures that their efforts to get information does not go wasted (Mateus, 2015)**.** Many of the news and information that can be obtained from the sources or from people, you may not accept the media organizations to publish it, because of several factors affecting of publishing the news. Journalist resort to social networking sites, and applications used in the media and communicate with others, to publish more details separately from the news, these sites and applications are a wide space to express opinions and publish information (Raacke & Bonds-Raacke, 2008; A. Smith & Brenner, 2012).

The use of SNSs new practice-oriented methods of publishing news and get some information from sources, using these sites (e.g. Facebook, Twitter and WhatsApp) to communicate with the parties to the case, because the advantage of saving time and effort on the journalist, and most people have accounts on these sites and can contact them at any time (Murthy, 2013; Sánchez-Moya & Cruz-Moya, 2015). The third usage of social networking sites by Jordanian journalists is to publish the news to the largest possible number of readers. The journalists used these sites in order to the publication of news rejected by the institution, ensure that their hard work does not go wasted, publish more details separately from the news, express his personal opinion away from the news, and save their time.

Some journalists are using social networking sites to spread the news, rejected by their organizations. There are many news stories or may not agree with the editorial policy of the media organizations, so those responsible for these institutions may work to reject some of the news for a number of considerations. Therefore, the journalist resort to publish this news on social networking sites to ensure that their hard work does not go wasted. These sites are a new portal for journalists to publish their stories and share it with the public.

Another advantage of using social networking sites in the media, allow journalists to express their views away from the news, one of the things that they face in the traditional media. Today, journalists can express their opinions on the

various issues without the link to the content of the news published, it may be the opinion of the journalist is contrary to some of the information in the news but he cannot be added to the news because the news should not contain the personal opinion of the journalist. In addition, social networking sites are considered a quick way to reach the widest possible audience, and it helps to save time and effort rather than wait for the next day until the distribution of the newspaper, or waiting for news bulletin on television to display the report.

CONCLUSIONS

Based on the above discussion, Jordanian Journalists can use of social media to bring ideas and feedback about any issue from audiences, and via continuous interactivity with users, journalists seeking to develop a different form of relationship more effective than the connection types created by traditional media. The Journalist is working on the review of people and journalists pages, and pages of news sites, local and international newspapers, to know the latest news and details about a specific issue, or to get new ideas could have used in the construction of a report or story, many of these pages raises general issues, can a journalist that the follow-up using its own style.

Jordanian journalists believe that there is great competition between the public and journalists in the dissemination of events, therefore, social networking sites have become an important way for journalists, and reliable platform to get news and communicate with sources. This competition and features offered by these sites for journalists led to a change in some media concepts, and led to the adoption of these sites as sources to obtain information from any location at any time, Which it was rejected by many media organizations at the beginning of the emergence of these sites.

The problem that may face the journalist at the adoption of information that people post without reliable sources, or comments on the news and to clarify parts of the news, that this information may be published as a personal opinion, or incomplete information, or aimed at people from which to raise the issue and attract attention. In addition, the journalist must be sure that the information obtained from sources before publication, whether in the newspaper or on social networking sites, there are many goals for sources such as spread rumors or false news or stir up public opinion, and this can cause problems for the journalist. Research on the uses of social networking sites is one of the new areas that need further research in the future, in addition to the importance of studying the credibility of these sites compared to traditional media.

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